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ABSTRACT

Because of their deficits in academic attainments and different cultural styles, socially disadvantaged children create more potential than other children for classroom management problems. To improve classroom management, teachers should maintain a clean room and train their students to enter that room in an orderly fashion. In dealing with their students, teachers should learn their names, be impartial, be clear in their instructions, require their students to be accountable in their homework assignments, and aim at full class participation. In the matter of discipline, the effective teacher, always taking note of undercurrents of behavior and employing high interest activities to maintain order, will develop a rapport with students characterized by friendliness, flexibility, and consistency with discipline. The good teacher, eschewing threats and the temptation to frequently call in outside help, will work with individual offenders and will avoid taking misbehavior personally.
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Classroom Management and the Socially Disadvantaged

by

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To teach the socially disadvantaged child really calls for effective teachers. Unlike teaching children from higher socio-economic environments classroom management and discipline are integral parts of the total teaching process, but more so. The socially disadvantaged, because of his deficit in academic attainment and his different learning style, needs more concentrated and variety of experiences which means a more concerted effort on the part of the teacher. Some of the reasons for the poor scholastic achievement of these children, which result in classroom management problems are believed to be the following:

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1. Inadequate language skills (both listening and speaking).
2. Inadequate model figures at home and in the community.
3. School teaching staff unstable.
4. Poor work habits.
5. Lack of drive for achievement and lack of encouragement.
6. Frequent tardiness and/or absenteeism.
7. Unfamiliar content in textbooks.
8. Lack of sensori stimuli at home.
9. Psychological problems at home which are peculiar to the socio-economic background.

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10. School tests inadequate; severely damage confidence and basic self-esteem.
11. Environmental and academic retardation in some cases.

To overcome these regressive or deliterious factors, certain approaches need to be developed to cope with and assist the socially disadvantaged child in the classroom. This paper will discuss some of the classroom guidelines and ideas developed and implemented by the writers.

Classroom Management Guidelines:

1. Train your students to enter the room in an orderly fashion. Arrive on the scene before your students; many problems are avoided this way. Get the student to feel that they are entering your room to learn, not that they are visiting you to have fun. As soon as the children enter the room, they should know to open their notebooks, copy the assignment and get a start on a specific task. Do not let them socialize or walk around: the beginning of the lesson is delayed and disciplinary problems develop.
2. Keep a clean and attractive room. Never start and continue a lesson in a dirty atmosphere with wardrobes gaping and closets doors swinging wide or with paper and chairs flung about. It is in a sense condoning or ignoring an intolerable situation. The tone of disorder is set. By the same token, there should be no extra props that the children might want to touch or could throw. Pictures and bulletin boards could not only be examined but also frequently changed. This caring on the part of the teacher plays an important role. The students realize that you are aware of and concerned with the total classroom situation.
3. Be certain that you have everyone's attention before you start the lesson. If you ignore the slightest infraction, the general tone of the class will steadily worsen. Be on your "toes". Stop work if you have to. Get the offender to order immediately; do not make the common mistake of waiting for the child to stop when he feels like stopping. If you require 100% attention, you will get it.

4. Be consistent with your class routine. These children cannot cope with change. The place reserved on the blackboard for homework, the date and aim of the lesson should not be changed. And change should be gradual and not frequent.

5. Get to know the students early in the term, first week at the outset. The quicker you know your students the quicker they realize they cannot be shielded by anonymity. Learn the difficulties and failures of each individual student. A mutual understanding is established when the teacher knows the child by name and knows what his limitations are.

6. Hold Students Accountable. Challenge the student who comes late or does not do his homework. Make him an example, but never humiliate him. Make sure he understands that his grade is affected by everything he does in class. Do not let anything go unnoticed or you can possibly get away with poor preparation or behavior. On the other hand, help each child find success in achievement at his own level.

7. Speak softly. A loud voice suggests that someone else is competing against the teacher. A low voice, but one that is distinct enough to be heard in all parts of the room, is pleasant and denotes a calm atmosphere. Do not shout. It is an admission that you have lost control. Try not to get excited. Not only is it fun for any class when the teacher loses control, but it also causes the children to lose control. A firm personality, quiet dignity tempered with common sense will best maintain good daily discipline. Remember

Noisy teachers are found in noisy classrooms.

8. Be clear with your instructions. Give one instruction at a time or else you will confuse the children. Be sure your comments are understood and executed before posing another one. Be specific so you do not have to repeat yourself. Repetition weakens your control. Make only reasonable and necessary rules; be willing to explain the reasons for them, but rigidly enforce them. A weak disciplinarian should establish fewer rules; therefore, there will be fewer chances to break the routine and more opportunity to enforce the orders that are required. Teachers who seem to govern least, govern best. No one likes a tyrant, not even children.

9. Aim To Have Full Class Participation. By getting everyone in the class involved with the lesson, a teacher has better control. Train students to show respect to each other by listening to each other. Ask daydreamers to repeat what has previously been cited in class. Explain to the child that he has taken valuable class time. End in a positive note, reminding him that he usually does good work. Keep your students attentive by walking around the room and through the aisle, and by asking questions at random.

10. Be aware of undercurrents of behavior. Reserve part of your attention while instructing to watch, look, and listen. Never become so absorbed in the lesson that you lose audience contact. Do not fix your eyes merely on the child who is reciting. Take note of everyone's work. Avoid trouble by anticipating trouble. Call on a disruptive child to answer questions or to go to the blackboard. Try not to turn your back to the class, especially

blackboard try to face or frequently turn to the class; or if possible, have someone write on the board for you. Keep classroom control not so much by verbal reprimanding, but subtle methods.

11. Keep students in their seats, and most of your serious discipline problems will be reduced. Never permit indiscriminate walking or wandering about the room. Keep record of those who use the pass for any emergency. Do not allow a student to regularly leave the classroom; otherwise, you will have a great many students demanding the pass. "Satan finds work for idle hands".

12. Depend on Interest to maintain order. Interest is the most effective way of maintaining good discipline. A Bored Class is potentially a "Bad Class". Always keep the student engaged in a meaningful activity. Plan your work ahead of time. Have all your materials on hand. Have optimal and omittable items, and use them according to the amount of time left.

13. Be friendly but maintain a proper distance. Be willing to play the marginal role of entertainer. Be willing to ride waves; Namely take a joke, or else the children will try to make more waves. However never become too friendly. The children will take advantage. Similarly, never get to their level. The children prefer to keep the teacher on a different plane. Play no favorites. But, on the other hand, try to alleviate a child's hurt feelings when possible.

14. Be consistent with discipline. Do not ^{be} lenient one day and strict the next. Inconsistency is bewildering for any child. All threatened punishments must be carried out. The minute the children discover you do not remember they will hold it against you for not reprimanding the student you forgot about. The second student will immediately claim favoritism and he will have a good case against you. Pupils recognize fairness in teachers. They will not feel resentful, which is one of the major causes of behavioral problems.

15. Be flexible. Deviations from routine must be handled according to the individual and not as routine. Some children need guidance, not discipline, others need a strict approach. Some children can be dealt with right on the spot; others are too excitable and can only be dealt with after class. Never punish an angry child and never punish a child when you are angry.

16. Always work with the individual offender. Never punish the whole class when a few are responsible. It is a sign of weakness and indicates that you cannot cope with the situation. More important, it causes resentment and creates additional disciplinary problems. If you cannot distinguish the guilty one, stop work and explain that ^a few selfish children are responsible for having to stop the lesson. Invoke peer group disapproval without asking for names. Urging children to inform on each other will only unite them against you. But watch to whom the children turn. Even if the offenders cannot be differentiated, this method should at least contain them. Make no hasty decisions: It may be wiser to postpone a decision for a day.

17. Handle all disciplinary cases yourself whenever possible. When you call on someone to maintain discipline in your class, you are in a sense surrendering authority, in fact, you are admitting defeat. The problem must be serious for you on a higher authority's help, because you will probably never again have the same control. Suit the punishment to the crime. Remember: "The potential is worse than the actual."

18. Do not threaten. Doing without threatening is far more effective. Your point can be made by the way you touch the child, look at him, and handle yourself. If you do threaten, avoid the impossible. Once you are unable to carry out your warning you lose face. Certainty is a better deterrent and severity.

19. Never make the offense personal, never allow audience situations. The child's breach in classroom should never appear to be directed at the teacher, but at his classmates. Says the teacher, "Robert, you are ruining it for the class". Avoid public issues. Avoid giving any student a chance for an argument in front of the class; the child becomes here and breach becomes obvious. Says the teacher, "John, I've been fair to you, but you are not being fair to us". or "Robert, let's talk after class". Do not reprimand a child in front of his peers. Never allow a pupil to create a situation which aligns the other pupils against the teacher and with the offender.

Children want order, security and structure. They do not like licensed freedom. Therefore, through a traditional, structured, but friendly approach the teacher establishes a learning milieu in which discipline problems are prevented.